ECLIPSE COMICS
MIRACLEMAN No. 20
NEIL GAIMAN and
MARK BUCKINGHAM
$2.50 U.S./ $3.00 CANADA
the

OCT 28TH, 1993.
SOMETIMES, I WONDER WHERE ALL THE NEW FESTIVALS CAME FROM.
THEY SEEM TO HAVE SPRUNG UP SPONTANEOUSLY, FROM GROUND-LEVEL, NEITHER IMPOSED NOR EVEN SUGGESTED FROM ABOVE.
FEBRUARY THE 4TH, FOR EXAMPLE, IS REBIRTH DAY. ALL CRIMES AND DEBTS AND OFFENSES ARE FORGIVEN; THE NEW YEAR STARTS WITH A CLEAN SLATE, IN MEMORY OF THE DAY IN 1982 WHEN MICHAEL MORAN BECAME MIRACLEMAN, HIS REBIRTH PRESAGING THE WORLD'S.
LAST FEBRUARY, FOR EXAMPLE, I FORGAVE JACK FOR HAVING AN AFFAIR WITH SOME LITTLE SLUT HE'D MET ON HIS TRIP TO OSAKA.
I'VE NEVER MENTIONED IT SINCE.
FOR MY PART, I ADMITTED THAT IT WAS ME WHO SCRATCHED ONE OF HIS DUMB DIXIE CUPS SINGLES.
HELL HATH NO FURY LIKE A VINTAGE VINYL COLLECTOR, BUT HE'S NEVER SAID ANYTHING MORE ABOUT IT.
AUGUST THE 17TH IS LONDON'S DAY, AND WE MOURN THOSE TAKEN BY THE ADVERSARY.
THE MOURNING CONTINUES FOR FIVE DAYS. LAST YEAR, FOR THE FIRST TIME, I FASTED FOR THE FULL FIVE DAYS, EATING NOTHING AT ALL, DRINKING NOTHING BUT WATER. I DON'T KNOW WHAT MADE ME THINK OF FASTING, BUT IT SEEMED RIGHT.
THIS YEAR I ALSO FASTED. BUT THEN, ALMOST EVERYONE ELSE SEEMED TO BE FASTING TOO.

THEN, AT THE END OF THE FIVE DAYS OF SORROW, THERE IS A CELEBRATION. IT'S CALLED CARNIVAL. EACH YEAR IT SEEMS TO GET BIGGER. THIS YEAR WE CLOSED DOWN THE WHOLE OF HOLLYWOOD, FROM THE AZA CHORN MEMORIAL FREEWAY IN THE EAST ALL THE WAY DOWN TO THE SAN DIEGO FREEWAY IN THE WEST, AND TURNED IT INTO ONE HUGE PARTY ZONE.
PEOPLE CAME FROM ALL OVER, AND THE PARTY LASTED FOR A WEEK.
IT WAS UNBELIEVABLE.

EVEN SO, NEXT YEAR I WANT TO MOURN AND CARNIVAL IN LONDON. I'VE BEEN TALKING TO JACK, AND HE'S COOL ON IT: IT'LL BE LIKE A PIL-GRIMAGE, HE SAYS, AND WE'LL TAKE GLEN WITH US.

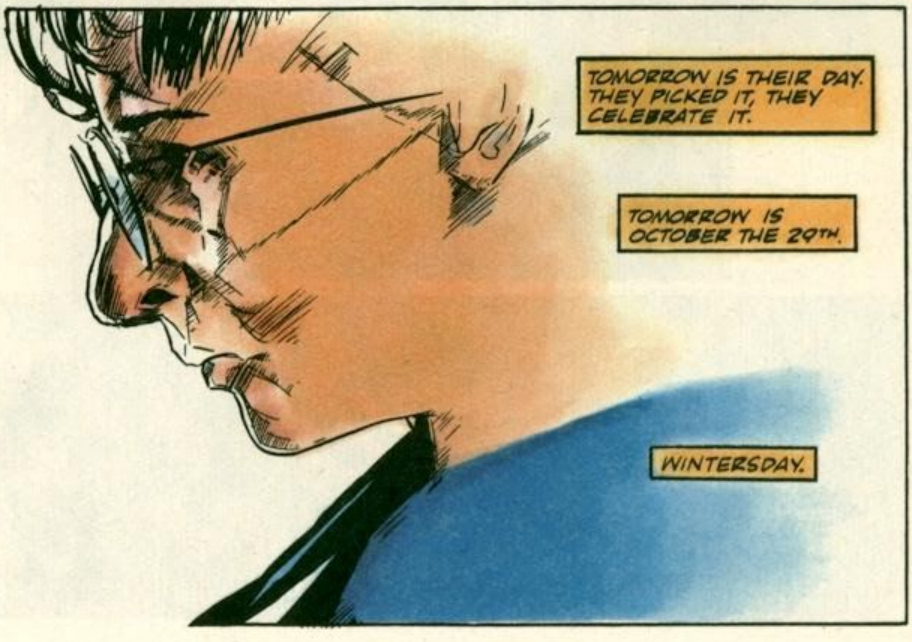
MIST, OF COURSE, HAS BEEN TO CARNIVAL IN LONDON EVERY YEAR SINCE SHE WAS BORN.

IT WOULD BE NICE TO THINK THAT THE WHOLE FAMILY WOULD BE TOGETHER, AT NEXT YEAR'S CARNIVAL: GLEN, JACK, ME AND MIST. BUT SHE'S GOT HER OWN FRIENDS, AND I DOUBT WE'LL SEE HER MUCH.
FESTIVALS.

THERE'S STILL NEW YEAR'S, OF COURSE, AND VALENTINE'S-- AND CHRISTMAS, WHEN WE REMEMBER ALL THE DEAD GODS AND LOST MYTHOLOGIES, AND EXCHANGE PRESENTS.
GLEN STILL BELIEVES IN SANTA CLAUS.
MIST SAYS SHE LOOKED ALL OVER THE NORTH POLE, AND COULDN'T FIND HIS HOUSE, BUT GLEN SAYS SHE JUST WASN'T LOOKING IN THE RIGHT PLACES.

HE'S SO CUTE.
AND SHE'S SO...

FESTIVALS.
TOMORROW, ALL OVER THE WORLD, CHILDREN WILL WAKE UP EXCITED AND PROUD: IT'S THEIR SPECIAL DAY. ADULTS WILL STEP BACK, AND, FOR ONE DAY, EVERYTHING WILL TURN UPSIDE-DOWN AS THE CHILDREN HELP DRIVE THE TRAINS AND FIRE TRUCKS, PRESENT THE NEWS, AND RAMPAGE THROUGH THE ADULTS' ONLY SECTIONS OF THE COMMUNICATIONS NET. WE KEEP AN EYE ON THEM, PICK THEM UP WHEN THEY FALL OVER, AND TRY NOT TO ACT TOO OVERANXIOUS.
FIRE
NBC


TOMORROW IS THEIR DAY. THEY PICKED IT, THEY CELEBRATE IT.
TOMORROW IS OCTOBER THE 29TH.
WINTERSDAY.

RACHEL! RACHEL!
HONEY, I'M WRITING. CAN'T YOUR FATHER TAKE CARE OF IT?
BUT DADDA TOLD ME TO COME UP AND GET YOU.
WELL, WHAT IS IT, GLEN?
MIST'S HOME!
WHAT? OH. I'LL BE RIGHT DOWN. I'LL JUST SAVE THIS DOCUMENT...
HI, MOM.
MIST! COME HERE, DARLING! HUG...
LET ME LOOK AT YOU.
YOU'VE GROWN.
NO, I HAVEN'T. I'M HOLDING MY SIZE AND WEIGHT CONSTANT FOR THE PRESENT. BUT IT'S SWEET OF YOU TO SAY SO.
UH. SO. HOW LONG ARE YOU GOING TO BE HERE?
I'LL STAY THE NIGHT.
WINTER'S HAVING A PARTY TOMORROW, BUT THAT DOESN'T START UNTIL NOON.
WHERE'S THE PARTY?
PARAGUAY, TO BEGIN WITH, BUT AFTER THAT IT'S GOING TO MOVE AROUND A BIT.

♫ WELL I OPENED UP THE DOOR AND MUCH TO MY SURPRISE THE GIRLS WERE WEARING FORMALS, THE GUYS WERE WEARING TIES...
WHAT'S THE MUSIC JACK?
SHANGRI-LAS. "SOPHISTICATED BOOM-BOOM."
♫ IT'S BEEN LONG OVERDUE... SOPHISTICATED BOOM-BOOM WE'VE BEEN NEEDIN' SOMETHIN' NEW... SOPHISTICATED BOOM-BOOM
IT'S NICE.
YOU GOT GOOD TASTE, MIST.
DADDA. I GOT A IDEA.
WHAT'S THAT, BIG GUY?
TOMORROW, CAN I DO A RECORD?
MAKE A RECORD, HON. NOT DO A RECORD.
MAKE A RECORD. CAN I SING ON A RECORD?
...YEAH. OKAY. I'LL PHONE THE GUYS AT SOUND AND VISION, SEE WHAT THEY THINK ABOUT HAVING A FOUR-YEAR-OLD CUTTING A DISK.
WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO SING?
BAA BAA BLACK SHEEP.
SOUNDS GOOD, BIG GUY. STICK WITH THE OLDIES, YOU WON'T GO TOO FAR WRONG.
I KNOW ALL THE WORDS.
YOU SURE DO.
BOY-- I WISH THERE HAD BEEN A WINTERSDAY WHEN I WAS A KID.
YOU KNOW WHAT I'D HAVE DONE?
I WOULD HAVE DIRECTED TRAFFIC. EVERY TIME I SAW A TRAFFIC COP WAVING THOSE CARS AROUND, I'D GET SO EXCITED. I'D PRACTICE HAND MOVEMENTS IN FRONT OF A MIRROR...

WHY WASN'T THERE WINTERSDAY WHEN YOU WAS LITTLE?
WERE LITTLE.
WERE LITTLE. WHY WASN'T THERE?
WE DIDN'T HAVE IT THEN. WE DIDN'T KNOW IT WAS WINTER'S BIRTHDAY, BECAUSE WINTER HADN'T BEEN BORN YET.
I WAS BORN. I COMED OUT OF MY MUMMY'S TUMMY. BEFORE SHE DIED.
...THAT'S RIGHT.
AND MIST CAME OUT OF RACHEL'S TUMMY. AND YOU WASN'T MIST'S DADDA. MIRACLEMAN WAS MIST'S DADDA.
THAT'S RIGHT, DEAR.
DID MIRACLEMAN PUT MIST IN YOUR TUMMY ON HIS OWN?
OF COURSE NOT, GLEN. MIRACLEMAN'S SPERM WAS SENT OUT TO WOMEN WHO DIDN'T HAVE CHILDREN, AND WHO APPLIED FOR IT.
SPEWM?
IT'S THIS WHITE STUFF THAT COMES OUT OF YOUR PENIS.
I ONLY GETS PEE-PEE OUT OF MY WEENY. DAT'S YELLOW.
THAT'S BECAUSE YOUR BODY IS STILL PRE-PUBESCENT--
MIST! GLEN! WELL, IT'S NEARLY BED-TIME!
LET'S SEE HOW QUICKLY YOU CAN CLEAN YOUR TEETH, AND GET INTO YOUR PAJAMAS--
I DID IT. 0.0376 OF A SECOND.
WAAAHH!
WHAT'S THE MATTER?
MUHHHMIST ALWAYS DOES EVERYFINK QUICKER VAN ME AN' AN' AN' EVERYFINK AN' AN' EVEN THOUGH I'M OLDER VAN SHE IS... HHNNNN.

EVERYTHING, DEAR. NOT EVERYFINK.
COME ON. I'LL CARRY YOU UP. MAYBE YOU AND MIST CAN HAVE A COMPETITION TO SEE HOW SLOWLY YOU CAN GET INTO BED.
I WANT MIST TO CARRY ME. MIST CAN FLY ME TO BED.
WELL...
AN' I WANT A STORY.
OKAY, HON. WHAT'LL IT BE? WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE? PETER RABBIT? OR THE ONE ABOUT THE WIZARD IN THE TOWER?
WINTER'S TALE.
AGAIN...?
COME ON!
OKAY. YOU BOTH READY? BOTH COMFORTABLE?
YES.
UH-HUH.
THEN I'LL BEGIN...

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WINTER'S TALE

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Winter was nearly half a year old.

She wanted to go into space to find things out.

"I'm going to see the Qys," she said to her daddy. "There are lots of things they can teach me. Bye bye."

"Bye bye, Winter," said Miracleman.

She stopped off behind the moon. "Which way are the Qys?" Winter asked Aza Chorn, the Warpsmith.

He thought for a little, then he pointed. "Do you see that star?" he asked.

"Yes," said Winter, who had very good eyes.

"There," said Aza Chorn.

"Then that's the way I'm going to go," said Winter, and off she went.

"Bye bye, Winter," said Aza Chorn.

Soon the sun was just another star. Winter flew on.

The Skella Merchants in their big bone ship caught Winter in their great glass nets.

"What have we here?" they asked themselves.

"Winter," said Winter.

"We've trawled a million-million things in our travels," said the Skella Merchants. "We've trawled bottles and diamonds and quibblefrands and Anything Machines. We've trawled guns and gewgews and gilly flowers, hats and ships and asteroids. But in all the years we've been trawling, and all the things we've trawled, we've never caught a Winter in our great glass nets before."

"Well, now you have," said Winter, "so why don't you invite her in for tea?"

The Skella Merchants invited Winter in for tea.

"Where are you going?" they asked her.

"I'm going to see the Qys," she said.

"Are you going through overspace or underspace?" they asked her.

"What's the difference?" said Winter.

"Qys ships go through underspace," they said, "where they keep their bodies. It makes the journey quicker. We go through overspace, and on the way we find all manner of things that people have left behind them. It's a slow journey, but the Skella Merchants live as long as they want to, and so we don't mind."

"First of all I want to go through overspace," said Winter. "I will meet more people that way."

The Skella Merchants showed Winter a little boat.

"Do you want to buy our little boat?" they asked her. "It will go even faster than you can fly: it floats on waves of light, and light pushes its sails."

"How much?" she asked.

"What do you own?" they asked her.

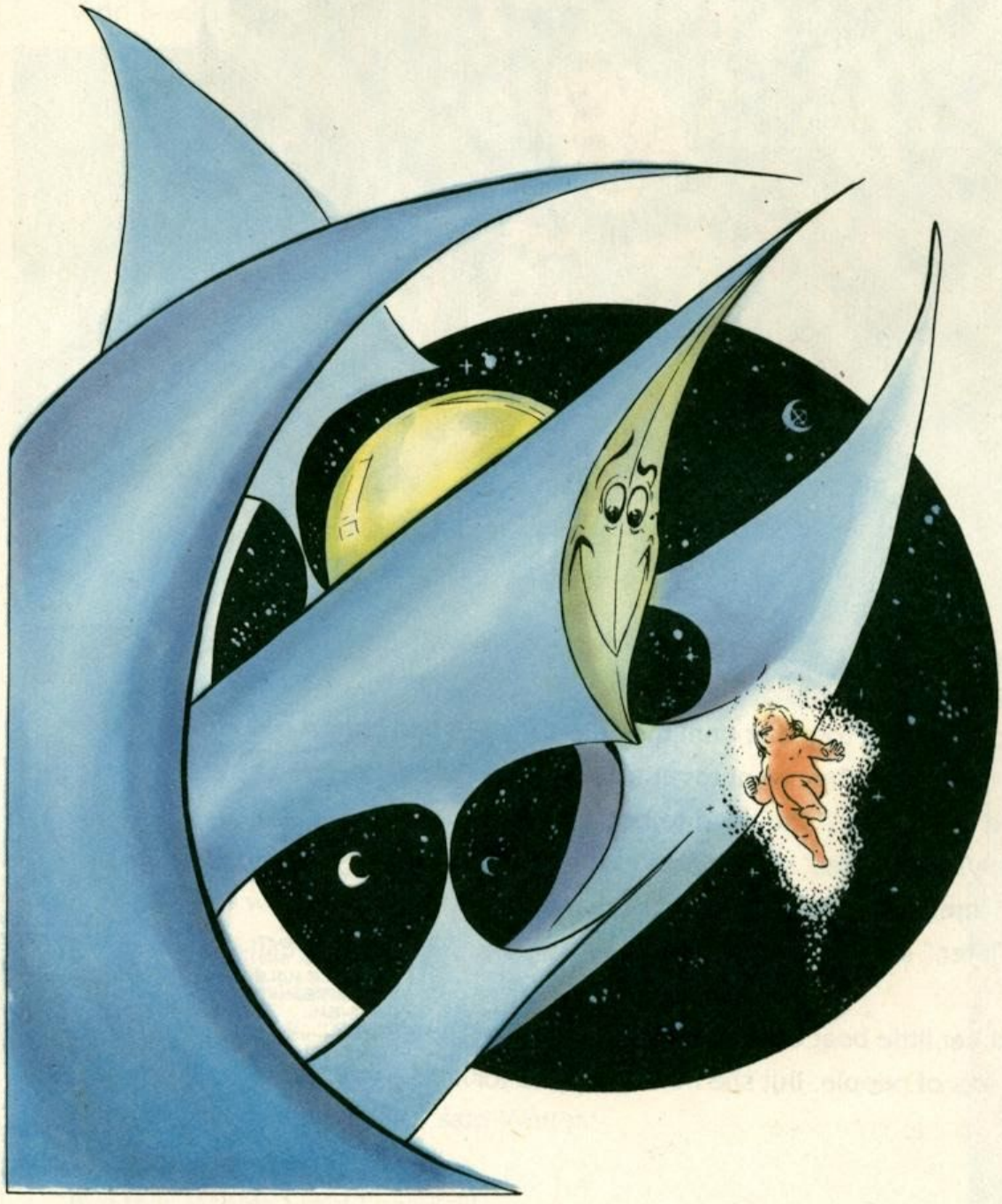
"Nothing," said Winter, and she smiled a big smile. "And Everything."

"Then it's yours already," said the Skella Merchants, and they showed Winter around her boat, showed her how to tack and reach and run.

Winter climbed into her little boat. "Bye bye, Skella Merchants," she said. "Thank you."

"Bye bye, Winter," said the Skella Merchants.

So Winter sailed away in her silver star boat, scudding on waves of light across the gulf.



The first of the gulf worlds she visited was the home of the Perlii. They welcomed Winter, but they found it strange that she was on her own.

"Where is your mate?" they asked her.

"I don't have one," said Winter.

The Perlii thought this very odd. They married just after birth, and remained together until they died.

Everywhere they went, they went together.

"You must be very lonely," they said to her.

"I'm not lonely; I'm Winter," said Winter, and she laughed her Winter's laugh and went back into the sky.

"Bye bye, Winter," said the Perlii.

Winter sailed her little boat on across the stars of the gulf. She met lots of people. But she never stopped for very long.

I KNOW WHY THE PERLII WENT EVERYWHERE TOGETHER. WINTER TOLD ME.
IT'S BECAUSE THE FEMALES ONLY GO ON HEAT THREE TIMES IN THEIR LIFE, FOR ABOUT FIVE MINUTES A TIME, AND IF THE MALES AREN'T WITH THEM THEN ANOTHER MALE WILL IMPREGNATE THEM...
I'M SURE THAT'S RIGHT, DEAR. NOW...

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One day Winter blinked.

And between the beginning of the blink and the end, a Blue Warpsmith was standing on her little boat.

"Hello, Winter," said the Blue Warpsmith. "I have a message for you from the Black Warpsmiths."

"Hello. Why are you blue?" asked Winter.

"Blue Warpsmiths are artists and dancers and painters and bureaucrats," said the Warpsmith, whose name was Lona Krill.

"White Warpsmiths are warriors. Grey Warpsmiths are diplomats. Red Warpsmiths tend the hearts of stars..."

"And Black Warpsmiths?" asked Winter.

WHAT'S A...A...BURROW-CAT?
BUREAUCRAT, GLEN. IT'S SOMEONE WHO MANIPULATES AND UTILIZES INFORMATION AND CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION. AND THEY REGULATE THINGS FROM AN OFFICIAL STANDPOINT.
IF A WARPSMITH DIES, THE BLUE WARPSMITHS ASSIGN A NEW ONE TO TAKE THEIR PLACE.
HUH?
UM. A BUREAUCRAT IS SOMEONE WHO KNOWS LOTS OF THINGS, GLENNY.
OH.

"They are very big," said Lona Krill. "They sent me to say that The Adversary is destroying London. He and your family are going to have a fight."

"Let me know who wins," said Winter.

"I will," said Lona Krill.

He went away.

Then he came back. "Your father won," said Lona Krill, "and Aza Chorn is dead."

"I thought father would win," said Winter. "Bye bye, Lona Krill."

"Bye bye, Winter," said Lona Krill.

Winter stopped at Sauk.

"Will you marry me?" asked the Lantiman of Sauk. "You can be my newest child-bride."

"All right," said Winter. "I've never been married before."

She married the Lantiman of Sauk.

He was very big, but he made Winter laugh. He gave her a world of her own, and for a present he told her the biggest secret in the universe.

But he made her promise not to tell a soul what it was.

"How long will it take me to get to the Qys' star, in my little boat?" she asked him.

"Seven hundred and three thousand years, two months, and eleven minutes," said the Lantiman of Sauk.

"Then I think it's time for me to go," said Winter. She kissed the Lantiman on his big eye.

"You were the best bride I ever had," he said, sadly.

"You were the best husband I ever had," said Winter. "Bye bye, Lantiman of Sauk."

"Bye bye, Winter."

Winter had an idea. She called for a Warpsmith.

"Hello, Winter," said Kana Blur.

"Hello, Kana Blur," said Winter. "Show me your magic skin."

From before they are born, Warpsmiths have magic skin. That is how a Warpsmith warps.

Kana Blur showed Winter her magic skin.

IT'S NOT REALLY MAGIC SKIN. IT'S CALLED DERMA-CIRCUITRY. IT'S BIO-ENGINEERING, IMPLANTED FROM BIRTH. THE GULF WORLDS MADE THE BLACK WARPSMITHS, AND THE BLACK WARPSMITHS MADE ALL THE REST.
WINTER FINE-TUNED HER AURA, SO IT SERVED THE SAME FUNCTION. SO IT MIMICKED THE CIRCUITRY.

Winter made herself magic skin, just like Kana Blur's, but in her head. She made it out of her glow.

No one had ever done this before, except a Black Warpsmith.

That was when there were four Black Warpsmiths.

Now there are only three.

Kana Blur said, "That is good magic skin, Winter."

Winter wiggled her little fingers.

And she was a long way away.

"Bye bye, Winter," said Kana Blur, to the place where Winter had been.

Winter could not warp as well as a Warpsmith. But she was the first person who was not a Warpsmith to warp anything at all.

She warped to the edge of the universe, where the Whisper slinks.

She warped to the home of the Lantiman of Sauk, but he was asleep.

She warped to London, where they were building a big house in the ruins, but no one saw her. She was only there for a moment.

Winter warped back to her little boat.

"I thought you had left me for good," said her little boat. "I was so sad."

Winter gave her boat a big hug.

Then Winter warped her boat into the sky of the Qys world.

WINTER'S THE ONLY ONE OF US WHO CAN WARP. WE'VE ALL TRIED TO DO IT, BUT SHE'S THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN TUNE HER AURA.
EXCEPT FOR KAY, OF COURSE. BUT SHE'S GLONZO.
GLONZO?
IT WON'T MEAN ANYTHING TO YOU, MOTHER. IT MEANS THAT WHEN YOU CLOSE YOUR EYES AND LOOK AT HER, HER GLOW IS ALL SQUIZZY.
SQUIZZY?
I-WANT-YOU-TO-READ-MY-BOOK-TO-ME! SHUSH!
SORRY, HON. NOW...

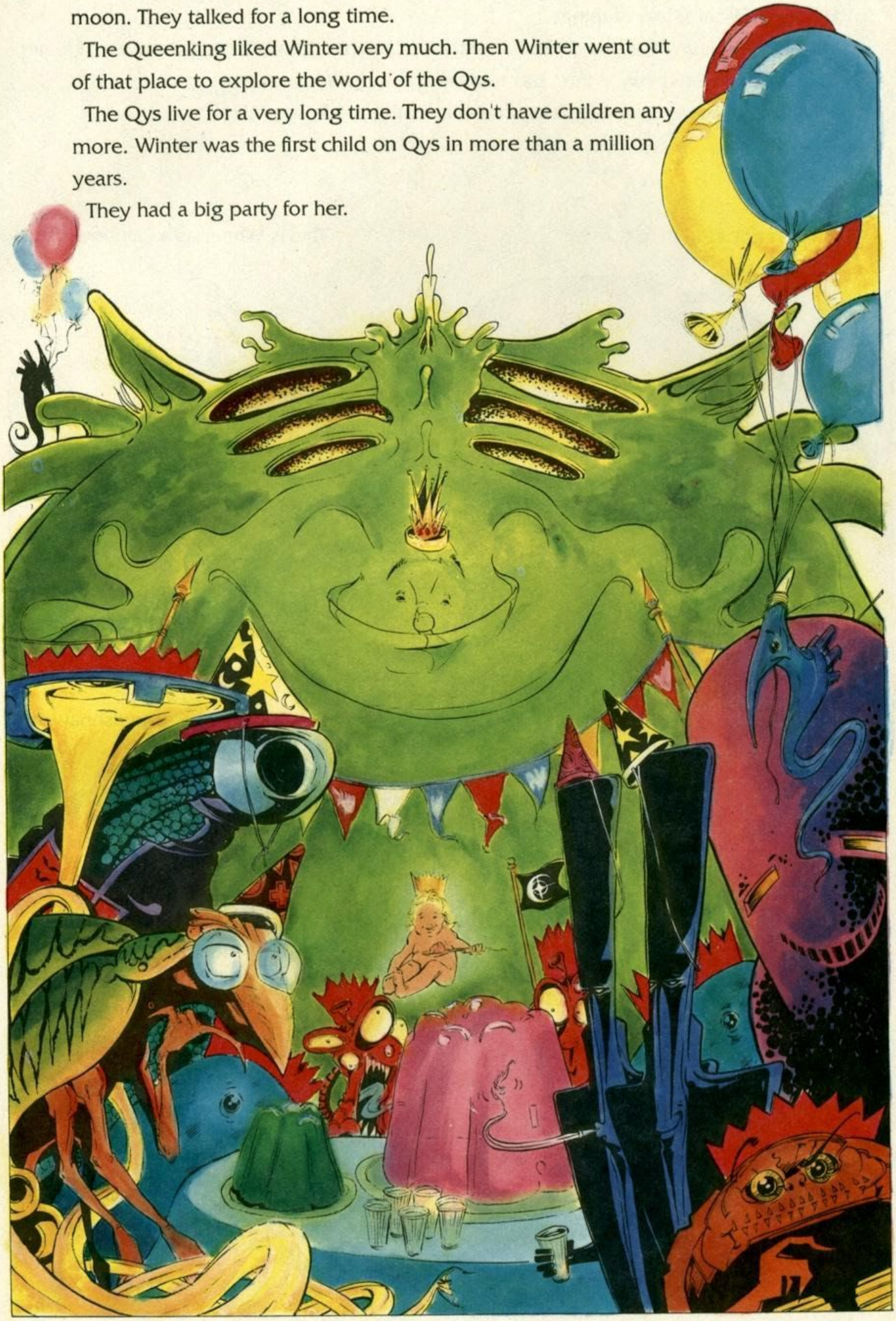
The Qys were very happy to see her.

Winter met the Queenking of all the Qys, who is as big as a moon. They talked for a long time.

The Queenking liked Winter very much. Then Winter went out of that place to explore the world of the Qys.

The Qys live for a very long time. They don't have children any more. Winter was the first child on Qys in more than a million years.

They had a big party for her.



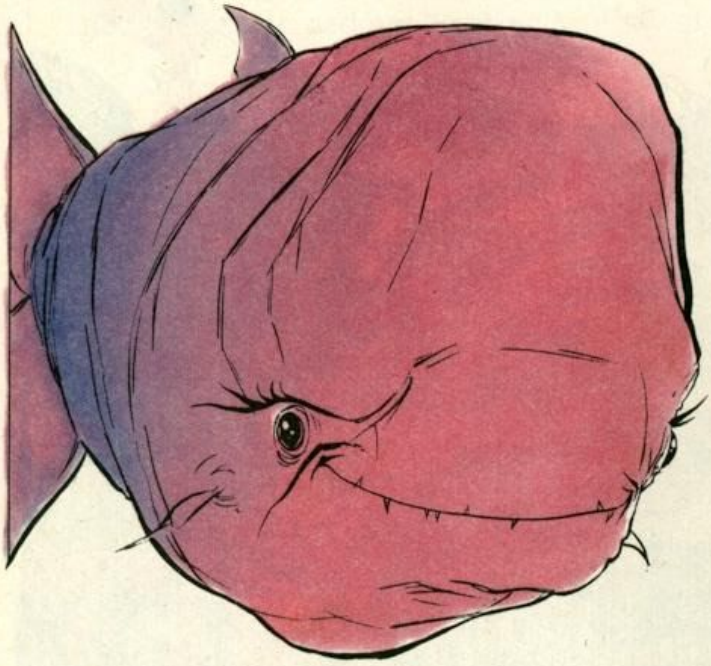
Then the Qys told Winter everything she wanted to know.

They taught Winter lots of things.

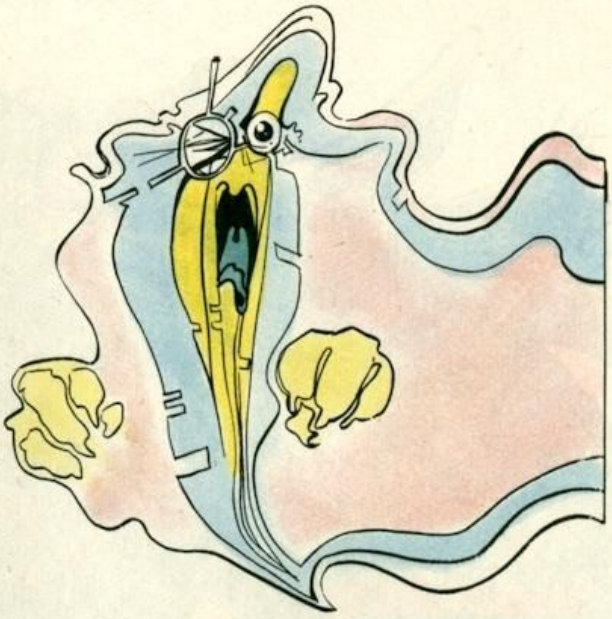
(None of them knew the secret the Lantiman of Sauk had told Winter, but now that is her secret, too, and to this day Winter has told no one what it is.)

They showed Winter how to put her mind into other bodies.

This is Winter as a giant fish.



This is Winter as a Rainbow Ghost.



This is Winter as a wiggly viral coil.

This is Winter as a squlshnaw-ttar.

She had so much fun.

Then one day Winter said to the Qys, "It's time to go home now. I have learned a lot of things. Thank you for having me."

The Qys said, "Thank you for coming. Come back again soon."

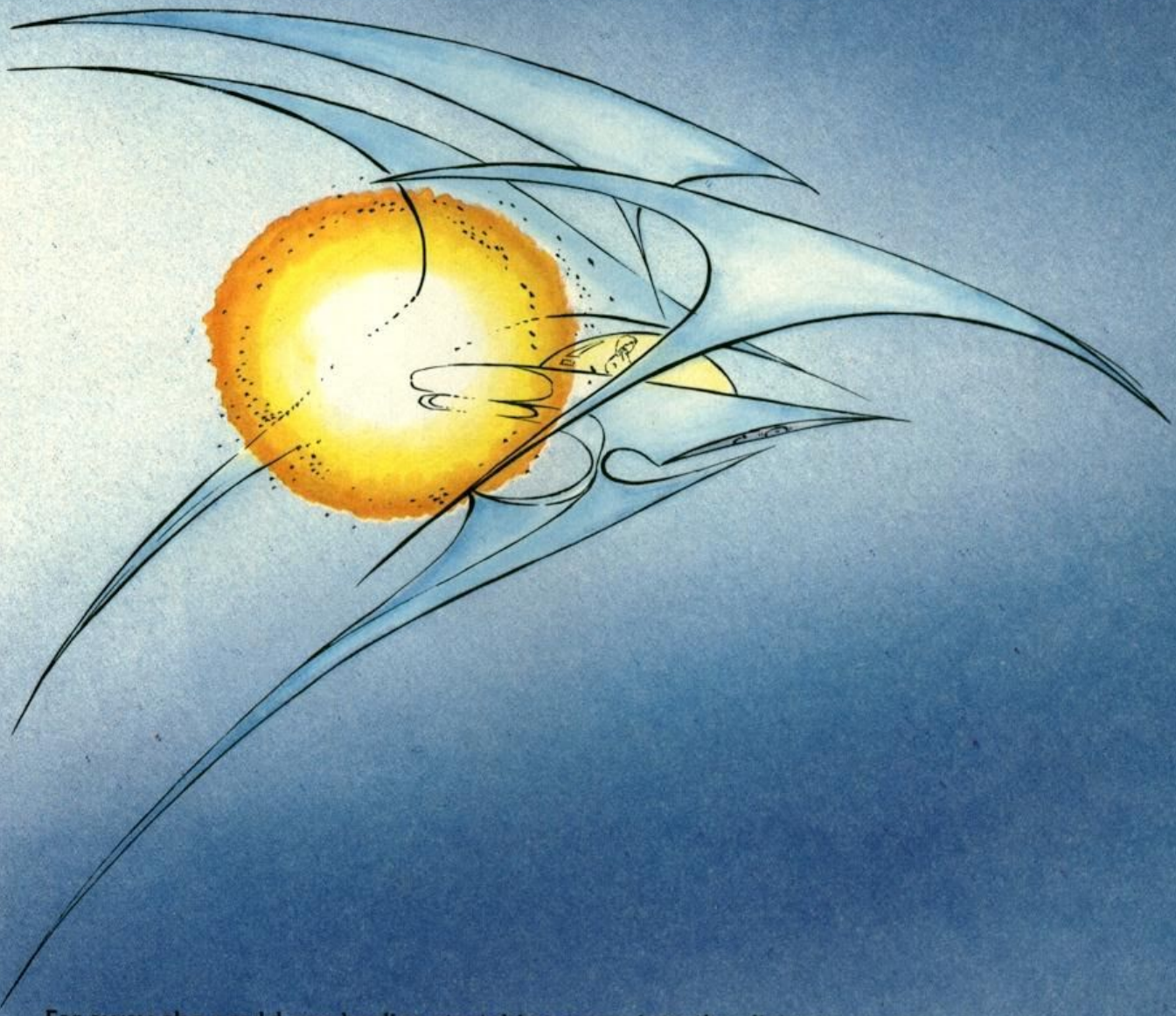
"Perhaps I will," said Winter. "Bye bye."

"Bye bye, Winter," said the Qys.

Winter climbed into her little boat, and warped a hole into underspace.

She made a little sun, and put it behind her boat. The light from the sun pushed her little boat along.

She sailed it down the trade ways.



Far away she could see bodies stretching away into the distance, more than you could count if you started today and finished when you were a hundred and two.

She came out of underspace in a hole above Wiltshire.

Winter warped her little boat into orbit.

"Bye bye, little boat," she said.

"Bye bye, Winter," said the little boat. "Come and ride me again soon."

Winter sat in the Wiltshire snow.
She made a snowball.

She made a bigger snowball.

She put the little snowball on top of the big snowball.

She put in a twig. She put in two pebbles.

She gave the snowman a big smile.

Then she flew to London.

At the top of the biggest house in the whole wide world, she sat and she waited.

When he came home, her daddy got a big surprise. Here was his little girl. She wasn't a baby any more.

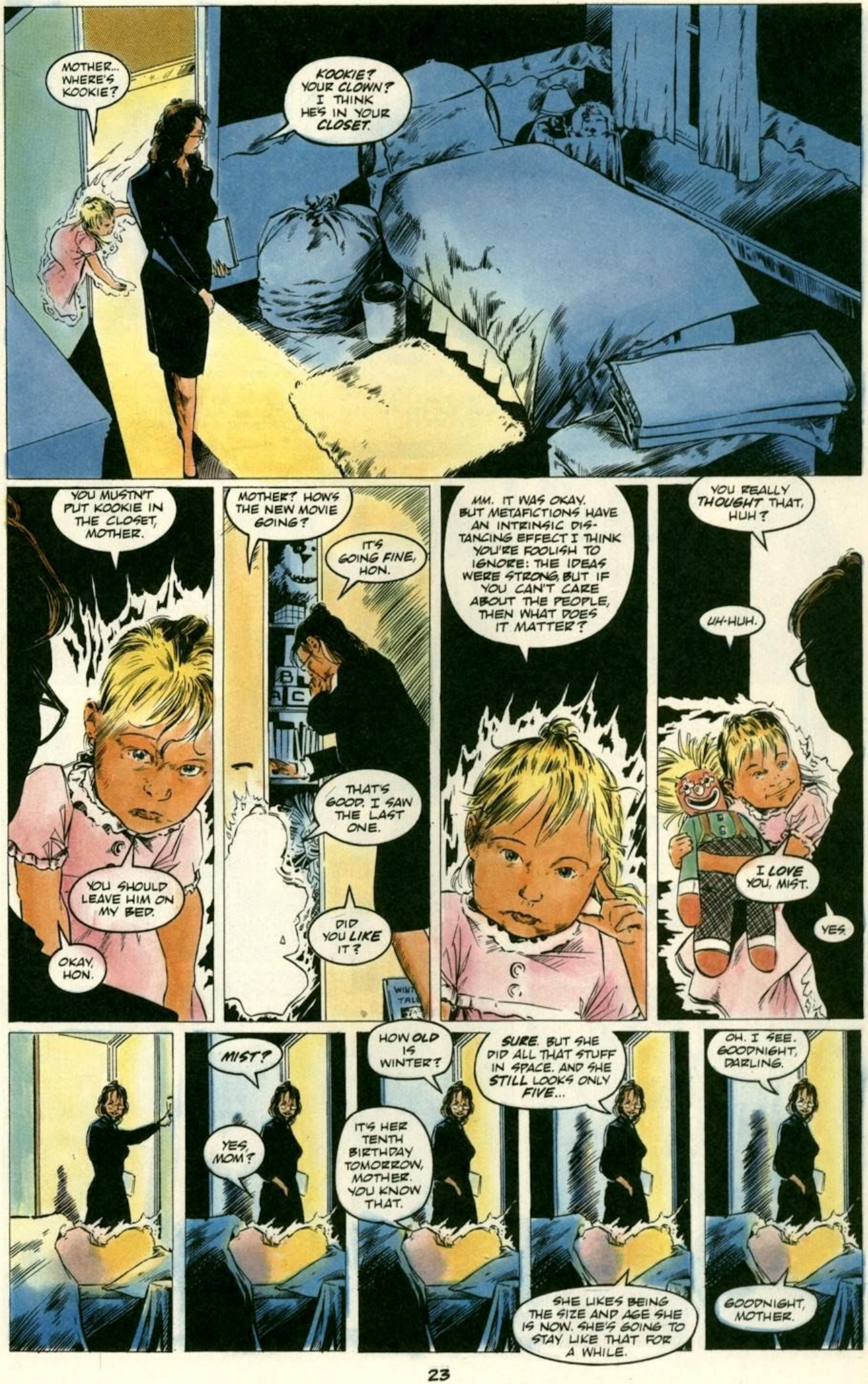
"Hello, Winter," said Miracleman.

Winter grinned.

"I'm back," she said.

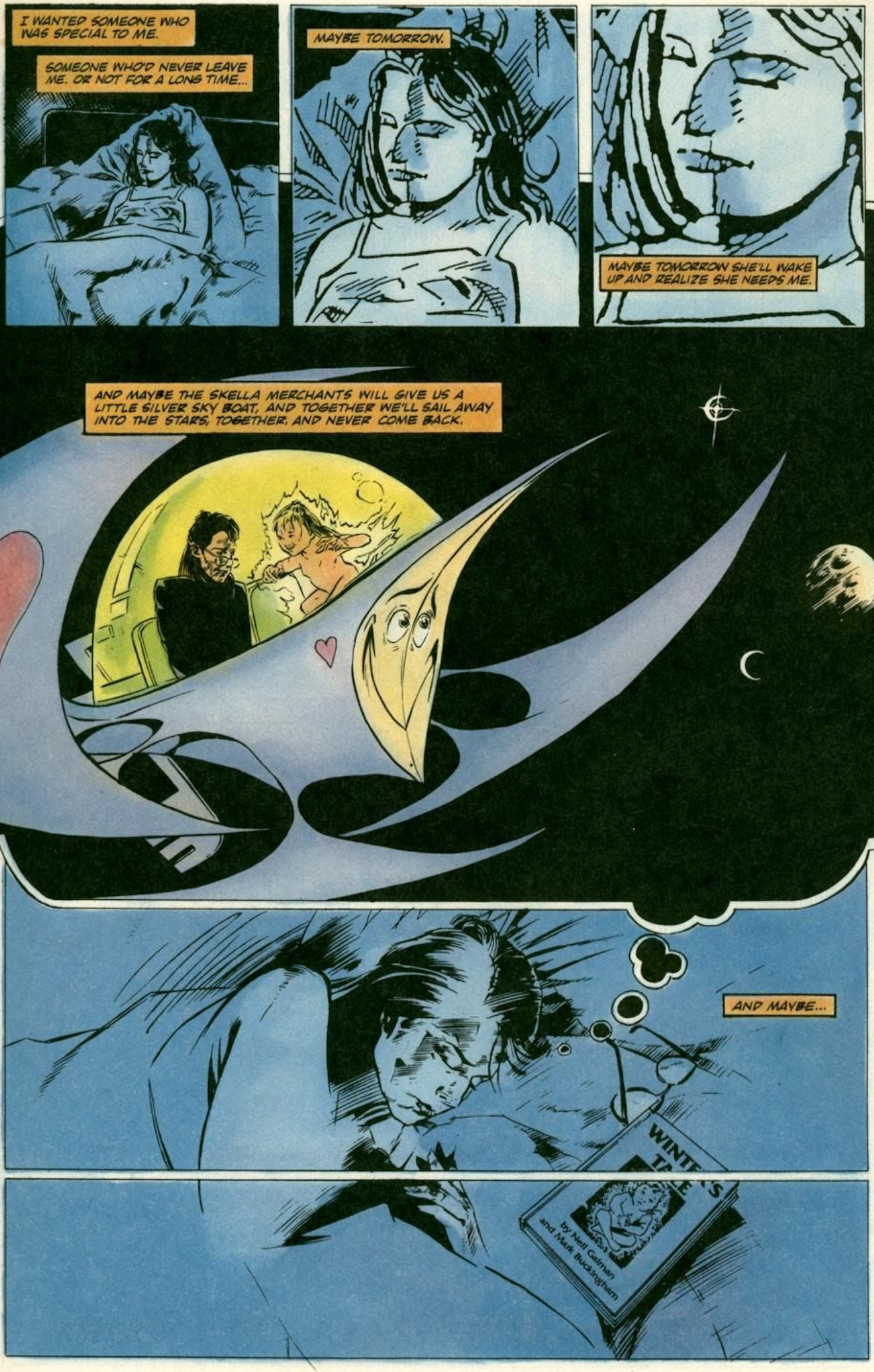
THE END

RACHEL? IS WINTER'S SNOWMAN STILL THERE?
I DON'T THINK SO. SNOWMEN MELT. THEY DON'T LAST FOREVER.
IF I MADE A SNOWMAN, I WOULD PUT IT IN THE FREEZER AND IT WOULD ALWAYS BE THERE FOR EVER AND EVER AND EVER, AND I WOULD TAKE IT OUT AND PLAY WITH IT.
IT WOULDN'T LAST FOREVER, GLEN.
BUT I'D LOVE IT.
WINTER TALE
WOULDN'T MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE, GLENNY.
IF I LOVED IT, IT WOULDN'T GO AWAY. Y'KNOW...
GOOD NIGHT, GLENNY.
G'NIGHT, RACHEL. WILL YOU ASK DADDA TO GIVE ME MY KISS.
SURE, HON.
SLEEP WELL, GLEN.
G'NIGHT, MIST.
MOTHER. WHO'S KOHAKU JO?
UHH. SOMEONE JACK USED TO KNOW. WHY?
JACK WAS TALKING TO HER DOWNSTAIRS, ONSCREEN, WHEN YOU WERE READING TO US. I COULD HEAR THEM.
HE REALLY LIKES HER.
HE'S PLANNING ON LEAVING YOU FOR HER. HE AND GLEN WILL BE MOVING TO OSAKA.
OH.

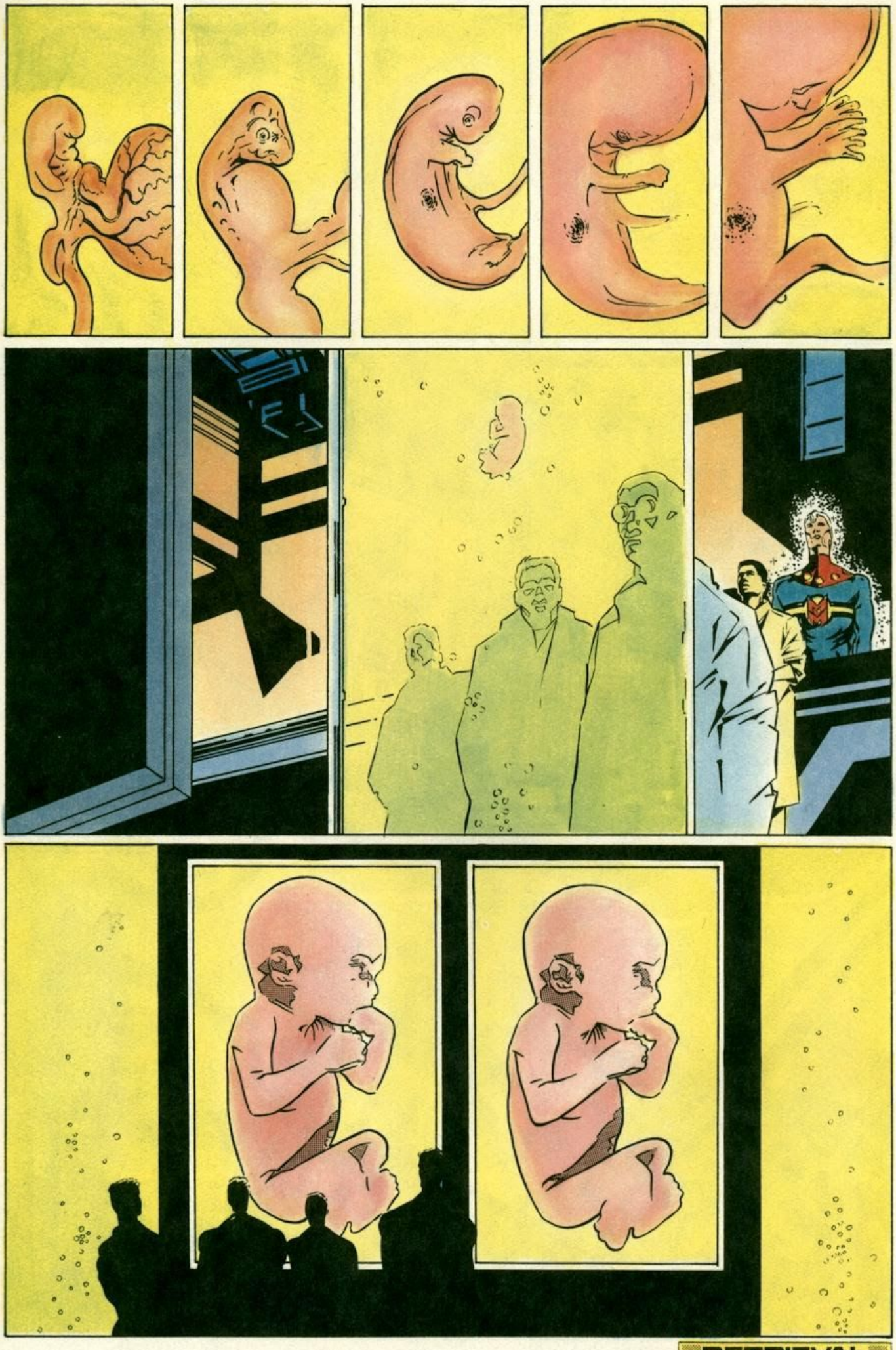

MOTHER... WHERE'S KOOKIE?
KOOKIE? YOUR CLOWN? I THINK HE'S IN YOUR CLOSET.
YOU MUSTN'T PUT KOOKIE IN THE CLOSET, MOTHER.
YOU SHOULD LEAVE HIM ON MY BED.
OKAY, HON.
MOTHER? HOW'S THE NEW MOVIE GOING?
IT'S GOING FINE, HON.
THAT'S GOOD. I SAW THE LAST ONE.
DID YOU LIKE IT?
MM. IT WAS OKAY. BUT METAFICTIONS HAVE AN INTRINSIC DISTANCING EFFECT I THINK YOU'RE FOOLISH TO IGNORE: THE IDEAS WERE STRONG, BUT IF YOU CAN'T CARE ABOUT THE PEOPLE, THEN WHAT DOES IT MATTER?
YOU REALLY THOUGHT THAT, HUH?
UH-HUH.
I LOVE YOU, MIST.
YES.
MIST?
YES, MOM?
HOW OLD IS WINTER?
IT'S HER TENTH BIRTHDAY TOMORROW, MOTHER. YOU KNOW THAT.
SURE. BUT SHE DID ALL THAT STUFF IN SPACE. AND SHE STILL LOOKS ONLY FIVE...
SHE LIKES BEING THE SIZE AND AGE SHE IS NOW. SHE'S GOING TO STAY LIKE THAT FOR A WHILE.
OH. I SEE. GOODNIGHT, DARLING.
GOODNIGHT, MOTHER.

WHEN I WAS ONE, I HAD JUST BEGUN.
WHEN I WAS TWO, I WAS NEARLY NEW.
WHEN I WAS THREE, I WAS HARDLY ME.
WHEN I WAS FOUR, I WAS NOT MUCH MORE.
WHEN I WAS FIVE, I WAS JUST ALIVE.
BUT NOW I AM SIX, I'M CLEVER AS CLEVER, SO I THINK I'LL BE SIX NOW FOREVER AND EVER.
WHAT WAS THAT, LOVE?
JUST SOMETHING MY MOM USED TO READ TO ME, WHEN I WAS A LITTLE GIRL. BEFORE I WENT TO SLEEP.
GLEN WANTS HIS KISS GOODNIGHT.
♫ WELL I'M ALL GROWN UP I AIN'T A BABY NO MORE
AND I CAN DO THE THINGS I COULDN'T DO BEFORE
♫ GO WHERE I WANNA GO AND I CAN SEE MY FRIENDS
WELL I CAN SHIMMY ALL NIGHT
UNTIL THE PARTY ENDS...
POWER
OFF
ON

ARE YOU OKAY?
YEAH. I'M FINE.
YOU LOOK UPSET.
NO. NO, I'M NOT. I'M FINE.
MIST SAYS YOU'RE GOING TO GO AWAY WITH KOHAKU JO. YOU'RE MOVING TO OSAKA. WITH GLEN.
I...
I WAS GOING TO TELL YOU.
YEAH.
I'LL SLEEP ON THE BED IN MY STUDY TONIGHT.
FINE.
GOODNIGHT, JACK.
I REMEMBER WHEN I WANTED SO MUCH TO HAVE A BABY. SOMEONE SMART. SOMEONE PRETTY. SOMEONE WHO'D LOVE ME FOREVER AND EVER.
SOMEONE WHO'D NEED ME.
IT'S WINTERSDAY TOMORROW.
EVERYTHING TURNS UPSIDE-DOWN. THE CHILDREN GET TO BE THE ADULTS BEFORE THEIR TIME. JUST FOR A DAY.
THEY KNOW MORE THAN WE DO. THEY'VE TRAVELLED FURTHER. THEY'VE SEEN SO MUCH MORE THAN WE HAVE.
THERE'S A COLD PLACE INSIDE ME, AND I THOUGHT A CHILD WOULD MELT IT.


I WANTED SOMEONE WHO WAS SPECIAL TO ME.
SOMEONE WHO'D NEVER LEAVE ME. OR NOT FOR A LONG TIME...
MAYBE TOMORROW.
MAYBE TOMORROW SHE'LL WAKE UP AND REALIZE SHE NEEDS ME.
AND MAYBE THE SKELLA MERCHANTS WILL GIVE US A LITTLE SILVER SKY BOAT, AND TOGETHER WE'LL SAIL AWAY INTO THE STARS, TOGETHER, AND NEVER COME BACK.
AND MAYBE...
by Neil Gaiman and Mark Buckingham

RETRIEVAL 4



RETRIEVAL
TO BE CONTINUED